

# FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



John L. Winn  
Commissioner of Education



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March 30, 2006

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** School District Superintendents  
Community College Presidents  
State University Presidents

**FROM:** John L. Winn

**SUBJECT:** Articulation Coordinating Committee Dual Enrollment Task Force Update

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As a follow up to my January 5, 2006, memo regarding GPA Weighting Policies for Advanced Courses, I would like to provide an update on the progress of issues relating to dual enrollment. On February 22, 2006, the Articulation Coordinating Committee (ACC) convened a workgroup to discuss dual enrollment policies. The workgroup, known as the "ACC Dual Enrollment Task Force," was comprised of K-20 representatives that serve as members of two of the ACC standing committees – Postsecondary Transition and Statewide Policies and Guidance.

In response to the many issues that have been raised relating to dual enrollment, the Task Force developed a series of policy recommendations to be addressed in statute, rule, and/or technical assistance paper. Specifically, the Task Force recommended amending Section 1007.271(16), Florida Statutes, to clarify and standardize state policy regarding the weighting of advanced courses in calculating grade point averages for the purposes of determining class rank. The proposed language (see attached) was forwarded to the Legislature for consideration. In addition, the Task Force recommended the development of a State Board of Education rule to provide clarification regarding the parameters for limiting student participation in dual enrollment courses. A summary of the specific recommendations is attached.

As the Legislature considers the proposed statutory amendment, and the State Board of Education begins the process of developing a rule relating to dual enrollment, the Department of Education is working to develop a comprehensive technical assistance paper. To ensure that the technical assistance paper includes the most up-to-date and accurate information, I expect that it will be completed and distributed in

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May – following the close of the 2006 Legislative Session. However, as you develop your interinstitutional articulation agreements and student progression plans for next year, it will be necessary for school districts to review existing GPA weighting policies to ensure compliance with current statutory requirements that prohibit discrimination against dual enrollment courses.

If you have any questions concerning the ACC Task Force recommendations, you may contact Dr. Heather Sherry, Director of the Office of Articulation, at (850) 245-0427 or [heather.sherry@fldoe.org](mailto:heather.sherry@fldoe.org).

JLW/TAK/hsa

Attachment

**ACC DUAL ENROLLMENT TASK FORCE**  
**Recommendations**  
**February 22, 2006**

**GPA WEIGHTING**

Section 1007.271(16), Florida Statutes, prohibits discrimination against dual enrollment courses in GPA weighting. However, statutory language should be clarified to ensure consistency of interpretation statewide.

Proposed Language:

**Section 1007.271(16), Florida Statutes**

(16) For students who enter grade 9 in the 2006-07 school year and thereafter, school districts and community colleges must assign equal weight to Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, Advanced International Certificate of Education and college-level specific dual enrollment courses identified by the State Board of Education the same as honors courses and advanced placement courses when grade point averages are calculated. All other college-credit dual enrollment courses shall receive the same weight as high school honors courses in GPA calculation. Alternative grade calculation or weighting systems that discriminate against dual enrollment courses are prohibited.

- Note: The new language in the second sentence includes college-credit occupational dual enrollment courses (not PSAV) – these courses will be weighed the same as honors courses.

Additional Clarification needed in Rule/Technical Assistance Paper:

1. Any new policy that is adopted relating to GPA calculation will not require retroactive application to courses that have already been completed by students. However, it is necessary for districts to ensure that their current policy does not discriminate against dual enrollment courses, as prohibited by existing statute.

For example, school district policies that discriminate against dual enrollment courses in the following ways are considered to be out of compliance with current statute:

- ✓ Policies that provide differential weight for 1000 and 2000 level dual enrollment courses. The Statewide Course Numbering System (SCNS) assigns course numbers to dual enrollment courses and 1000 and 2000 level courses are considered to be EQUIVALENT. Therefore, there should be no difference in the weighting assigned to those courses.
  - ✓ Policies that provide NO weighting to some dual enrollment courses based on perceived rigor are in violation of current statute because the law requires that dual enrollment courses be weighted the same as honors and AP courses. Therefore, dual enrollment courses should receive AT LEAST the same weight as honors courses.
2. Some school districts currently have policies that limit the number of dual enrollment courses that a student may take per school year or academic term. Section 1107.271(2), Florida Statutes, specifically states: “Students who are eligible for dual enrollment pursuant to this section shall be permitted to enroll in dual enrollment courses conducted during school hours, after school hours, and during the summer term. Instructional time for such enrollment may vary from 900 hours; however, the school district may only report the student for a maximum of 1.0 FTE, as provided in s. 1011.61(4).”

Due to limited course space and course offerings, there should be no limit on the number of dual enrollment credits that eligible students can earn in a given semester or year.

Possible language for rule: School districts may not establish any policy that limits the number of dual enrollment credits that an eligible student may earn per academic term or year, unless such policy is agreed upon and contained within the interinstitutional articulation agreement.

3. Some school districts currently prohibit students from enrolling in a dual enrollment course simply because a comparable Advanced Placement or high school honors course is offered at the high school (for example: students may be prohibited from taking a dual enrollment course if an AP or honors course is offered in the same subject area). This practice *limits student choice*. In promoting acceleration options, the state should ensure that students are allowed to choose the option that best serves individual student needs and postsecondary goals (pros & cons – should be explained in advising process).

Section 1007.271, Florida Statutes, states that “District school boards may not refuse to enter into an agreement with a local community college if that community college has the capacity to offer dual enrollment courses.”

Possible language for rule: School districts may not prohibit eligible students from taking specific dual enrollment courses even when comparable subject area courses are offered at the high school.

4. Some high school students are currently not permitted to earn dual enrollment credits beyond the 24 credits required for high school graduation. However, if students are permitted to take high school courses beyond the minimum 24 credits required for high school graduation, then eligible students should also be allowed to take dual enrollment courses beyond the 24 credits (promotes true acceleration) provided that they complete all required courses prior to the expected official award date of the high school diploma.

\*\* Rule language may not be required due to a recent Technical Assistance Paper (TAP) addressing the issue. Further clarification will be provided in subsequent TAP; however, rule language may still be necessary to ensure compliance.

Excerpt from DOE Technical Assistance Paper – December 14, 2005

### **Statutory Requirements and Intent**

According to Section 1007.271(1), Florida Statutes:

*(1) The dual enrollment program is the enrollment of an eligible secondary student or home education student in a postsecondary course creditable toward high school completion and a career certificate or an associate or baccalaureate degree.*

Nothing in statute restricts students from taking dual enrollment courses once they have earned the required number of high school credits. Since high school students are not prohibited from earning more than the 24 required credits (4-year option), then they cannot be prohibited from taking dual enrollment courses for the remainder of the term(s) enrolled at the high school. Dual enrollment courses taken after completion of the 24 required credits can count as additional elective credit at the high school level. The legislative intent of the dual enrollment program is to provide acceleration opportunities, which have both academic and economic benefits to students. This approach also affords high school students the opportunity to take more rigorous and relevant coursework.